

What is claimed is:

1. A method of accessing documents stored on a first computer system through a second computer system, the first and second computer systems connected in a network environment, said method comprising:
 - 5 storing an identity information document from the first computer system, the identity information document comprising a user-friendly handle identifying a principal and a machine location for the first computer system;
 - intercepting a request for access to documents when the request is directed to the user-friendly handle;
 - 10 replacing the user-friendly handle with the machine location; and
 - sending request for access to documents to the machine location of the first computer system.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the user-friendly handle comprises an
15 email address.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the machine location comprises and IP address.
- 20 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the machine location comprises a public key.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein the request for access to documents comprises a principal-initiated request.
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6. The method of claim 1 further comprising an initial step of receiving the identity information document from the first computer system.
7. A method of publishing documents between a plurality of nodes, the nodes
30 connected in a network environment, said method comprising:

sending an identity information document from a publishing node to an
accessing node, the identity information document comprising a user-friendly handle
identifying a principal and a machine location for the publishing node;

storing the identity information document on the accessing node;

5 resolving the user-friendly handle with the machine location in a request
for access to documents, wherein the request is made from the accessing node to the
publishing node; and

sending the request for access to documents from the accessing node to the
publishing node.

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8. The method of claim 7 wherein the user-friendly handle comprises an
email address.

9. The method of claim 7 wherein the user-friendly handle comprises a
15 telephone number.

10. The method of claim 7 wherein the machine location comprises an IP
address.

20 11. The method of claim 7 wherein the machine location comprises a public
key.

12. The method of claim 11 further comprising:
using the public key to determine the current machine location for the
25 publishing node.

13. The method of claim 11 further comprising:
registering an encrypted machine name and a registered machine location
for the publishing node with a DNS server;
30 resolving the user-friendly handle with the public key;

converting the public key to the encrypted machine name;
using the encrypted machine name to look up the registered machine
location for the publishing node on the DNS server; and
sending the request for access to documents to the registered machine
5 location.

14. The method of claim 7 further comprising:
verifying that the accessing node has authorization from the publishing
node to review the requested documents before publishing the requested documents.

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15. The method of claim 7 further comprising:
delivering a path name for documents stored on the publishing node to the
accessing node.

15 16. The method of claim 15 wherein the path name is delivered to the
accessing node by email.

17. The method of claim 7 further comprising:
delivering a path name for documents stored on the publishing node to a
20 principal of the accessing node.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the path name is delivered to the
principal of the accessing node by a telephone call.

25 19. The method of claim 7 wherein the resolving step further comprises:
intercepting the request for access to documents when the request is
directed to the user-friendly handle;
finding a matching identity information document having a user-friendly
handle that matches the user-friendly handle in the request;

determining the machine location from the matching identity information document; and

amending the request to substitute the user-friendly handle with the machine location.

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20. The method of 7 further comprising:
delivering a path name combined with the user-friendly handle to the
accessing node; and
parsing the path name from the user-friendly handle prior to resolving the
10 user-friendly handle with the machine location.

21. The method of claim 20 further comprising:
adding the path name to the request for access to documents before
sending the request to the publishing node.

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22. The method of claim 7 wherein the identity information document further
comprises more than one machine location for principal identified by the user-friendly
handle.

20 23. A method of using a user-friendly handle to access documents stored on a
first computer system in a network environment, the method comprising:

storing an identity information document from the first computer system,
the identity information document comprising a user-friendly handle identifying a
principal and a machine location for the first computer system;

25 intercepting a request for access to documents in the form of the user-
friendly handle;

amending the request to replace the user-friendly handle with the machine
location; and

30 sending the amended request to access the documents to the machine
location of the first computer system.

24. The method of claim 23 wherein the user-friendly handle is an email address.

5 25. The method of claim 23 wherein the machine location comprises an IP address.

26. The method of claim 23 wherein the machine location comprises a public key.

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27. The method of claim 26 further comprising:
using the public key to determine the current machine location for the publishing node.

15 28. The method of claim 23 further comprising an initial step of:
receiving the identity information document from the first computer system.

29. The method of claim 23 further comprising the step of receiving published documents from the first computer system.

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30. A computer system comprising:
a storage module for storing an identity information document received from a second computer system, the identity information document comprising a user-friendly handle identifying a principal and a machine location for the second computer system; and

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a name resolution module connected to the storage module for intercepting requests for access to documents stored at the user-friendly handle and amending the request to replace the user-friendly handle with the machine location.

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31. The computer system of claim 30 wherein the user-friendly handle is an email address.

5 32. The computer system of claim 30 wherein the machine location comprises an IP address.

33. The computer system of claim 30 wherein the machine location comprises a public key.

10 34. The computer system of claim 30 further comprising:
a communication module connected to the name resolution module for sending and receiving communications to and from the second computer system.

15 35. A computer readable medium encoding a computer program of instructions for executing a computer process for name resolution, said computer process comprising:

storing an identity information document from a publishing computer system, the identity information document comprising a user-friendly handle identifying a principal and a machine location for the publishing computer system;

20 intercepting a request for access to documents stored on the publishing computer system, wherein the request contains the user-friendly handle; and
amending the request to replace the user-friendly handle with the machine location.

25 36. The computer process of claim 35 wherein the user-friendly handle comprises an email address.

37. The computer process of claim 35 wherein the machine location comprises an IP address.

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38. The computer process of claim 35 wherein the machine location comprises a public key.

39. The computer process of claim 38 further comprising:
5 using the public key to determine the current machine location for the publishing node.

40. The computer process of claim 38 further comprising:
10 registering an encrypted machine name and a registered machine location for the publishing node with a DNS server;
resolving the user-friendly handle with the public key;
converting the public key to the encrypted machine name;
using the encrypted machine name to look up the registered machine location for the publishing node on the DNS server; and
15 sending the request for access to documents to the registered machine location.

41. The computer process of claim 40 wherein the converting step comprises performing an algorithm on the public key.
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42. The computer process of claim 35 wherein the identity information document further comprises more than one machine location for principal identified by the user-friendly handle.
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